

**The API** is the cornerstone of the Public Schools Accountability Act of 1999 (PSAA). This index measures each school's academic performance and sets growth targets for future improvement.

Public schools now will be held accountable for increasing the academic achievement of all students. Schools that reach their annual targets may be rewarded. Schools that do not may be eligible for interventions or subject to sanctions.

compliments of  
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guide to the **api**  
academic performance index

### **What is the API?**

The API measures the performance and progress of a school. It is a numeric index or scale that ranges from a low of 200 to a high of 1000. The state has set 800 as the API score that schools should strive to meet. Schools that fall short of the target will be required to meet annual growth targets until their goal is achieved. Schools that already meet or exceed the 800 API should continue working to improve the academic performance of all students.

### **Who developed the API?**

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction named an advisory committee of educators and business leaders to oversee the development of all parts of the Public Schools Accountability Act of 1999. This advisory group worked with research and evaluation specialists from universities and public schools to create the 1999 API. The State Board of Education approved the 1999 API in November 1999.

### **What is the incentive for schools to improve their API scores?**

Schools that meet or exceed their growth targets will be eligible for monetary or other types of awards from the state. Schools that do not meet their targets will be eligible for interventions or may ultimately be sanctioned by the state.

### **What about schools with students who are not proficient in English?**

Currently, students in a district for less than one year and who are not yet proficient in English must be tested. These scores are included in a school's API.

### **Will the API affect my children's progress in school?**

No. The API is part of a state accountability system for schools, not individual students. As students increase their achievement, however, the school's score on the API can improve.

### **What is used to calculate the API?**

Results of tests given in the spring as part of the state's Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program are used to calculate a school's API.

Additional information about a school's academic performance will be used for the API in future years. That achievement data may include results of other tests that are aligned to state standards and attendance and graduation rates.

### **What does the API measure?**

In grades 2-8, the API measures performance in four content areas with the amount of emphasis given as follows: mathematics (40%), reading (30%), language (15%), and spelling (15%).

In grades 9-11, the API measures performance in five content areas: mathematics (20%), reading (20%), language (20%), history - social science (20%), and science (20%).

### **Why is an API score of 800 the statewide target?**

A school score of 800 or more on the API, on a scale of 200 to 1,000, indicates students are achieving at a high level of academic performance.

### **Where can parents go for more information?**

Parents should direct their questions about the API or any testing or plans for improving the school's academic performance to the principal or other local school administrators. Schools also will be asking parents to become actively involved in the improvement process. Further information about PSAA and API results can be found on the Internet at

**[www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov)**